

"Well, she might call it a flirtation," said Fenton, "But I didn't know it was one. I thought it was just walking up and down the deck and talking about you."
 "I'd rather you wouldn't have talked to that kind of people about me," returned Helen, with a retrospective objection which she tried in vain to make avail her.

"How should *I* know what kind of person she was? *I* never took the least notice of anything she did or said."

This was heavenly hopeless, and Helen resolved that for the present, at least, she would not inculcate herself. But she found herself saying:

"Well, then, I'm going to tell you about something that all came from my being desperate about you, and flirting a little one day just after you sailed."

She went on to make a full and free confession, to which her husband listened with surprisingly little emotion. He could not see anything romantic in it at all. He could not see anything remarkable in Lord Rainford.

"You can't," he said finally, "expect me to admire a man who came so near making an Enoch Arden of me."

"Oh, you know he never came near doing anything of the kind, Robert."

"He came as near as he could. Do you wish me to admire him because you refused him? You refused *me* three times."

"I wish you to—to—appreciate him."

Fenton laughed.

"Oh, well, I do that, of course. I've no doubt he was a very good fellow, and I dare say he's behaving more sensibly than I did. From what you tell me, I think he'll get over his disappointment. Perhaps he'll end by marrying some one who will help him to complete his reaction, and cure him of *all* his illusions about us over here. But his buying that pottery was nothing. He would have been a very poor creature if he had resented your refusal. I know that from my own experience."